

2015 8-Hour Ozone Standard

On October 1, 2015, United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) strengthened the 8-hour ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) to a level of 0.070 parts per million (ppm) (80 FR65292). The 2015 8-hour ozone NAAQS lowered the level (*0.075 ppm*) most recently set by U.S. EPA on March 27, 2008 (73 FR 16483).

Attainment of the 2015 8-hour ozone standard will be determined by evaluating the three-year average of the fourth highest daily maximum 8-hour average ozone concentration measured at each monitor. Under the 2015 8-hour ozone NAAQS, measured concentrations of ozone must not exceed 0.070 ppm.

The first step in implementing the 2015 8-hour ozone NAAQS is to identify areas that are not meeting the standard. In accordance with Section 107(d) of the Clean Air Act, states must submit initial designation recommendations to U.S. EPA within one year of the revised standard's promulgation, or by October 1, 2016.

On September 16, 2016, Indiana submitted initial recommendations to U.S. EPA, recommending that all monitored counties be designated as attainment and all other counties in Indiana be designated as unclassifiable. Indiana's recommendations are based on quality-assured, certified ambient air quality data for 2013-2015 and quality-assured data for the 2014-2016 timeframe. Both sets of data show that all monitors in Indiana are meeting the 2015 8-hour ozone NAAQS. Indiana's recommendations are also based on an assessment of additional factors, including emissions data, meteorology, geography/topography and jurisdictional boundaries.

By June 1, 2017, U.S. EPA will notify Indiana of its preliminary decisions, including any intended modifications to the initial air quality designation recommendations. Indiana will then have the opportunity to comment on U.S. EPA's response and to provide new information and analyses for U.S. EPA to consider before issuing final designations.

U.S. EPA must issue final designations within two years of the revised standard's promulgation, or by October 1, 2017, unless the U.S. EPA Administrator has insufficient information to make decisions. In such cases, U.S. EPA may take up to an additional year to issue final designations.

For more information about ozone designations, visit <http://www.in.gov/idem/airquality/2428.htm>.